

National Beading Week 2016

There was very definitely a beading buzz throughout 2016's National Beading Week (NBW), with lots of events, competitions and special offers of all sorts.

Many groups and bead traders got involved and between them, they organised numerous events across the UK, from as far north as Banffshire and as far south as Cornwall. And one group in The Netherlands couldn't resist the urge to enter into the NBW spirit, so National turned International again this year.

The Beadworkers Guild, the founders of National Beading Week, maintained the NBW website throughout, ensuring that groups' and traders' information was available for all to access. All they needed to do was send their logo and information to nbw@beadworkersguild.org.uk and Alison Peacock and Jane Marie Griffin took care of the rest.

The Beadworkers Guild also organised two competitions. The first, sponsored and judged by Patty McCourt, with co-judges Sylvia Fairhurst and Jane Marie, was to create a piece using Little People Beads. The winner was Jessica Hayman with Pam Kirk the runner up. The second competition was to find the "Wildest, wackiest most wonderful beading photo". The prize, as judged by Heather Kingsley-Heath, went to the Nan McKay beading group for an image of their members scrabbling on the carpet to retrieve those spilled beads!

Groups' activities included beading demos in the homes of members, workshops in local halls and there were even a couple of virtual beading festivals, with guest traders and tutors. Some groups took advantage of local craft shows where they could mount their displays, others set up their stand within their local bead shop, and others mounted exhibitions in their local library.

Traders got very imaginative with their special offers and discounts! Many had discount offers on bead purchases, some of them changing the offer daily to keep everybody on their toes. Discounts as high as 30% could be found. A few discounts were restricted to members of The Beadworkers Guild or Bead Society, but generally offers were open to all. There were some exciting competitions and prize draws, too. Several traders offered discounts to workshop participants as a way of encouraging new beaders. And for her Secret Beadalong this year, Jean Power made sure that the project would suit all levels of beader, including advanced.

Facebook was busy, too. As well as lots of comments about and likes of events and postings, there were three facebook 'takeovers', hosted by Sian Nolan, Jean Power and Chloe Menage. Each of them was available for an hour slot for live chat, but they all were so inundated with conversations that all of them ran well over time. This was something new this year and engaged many members. Both they and the designers seemed to enjoy the experience.

All this activity was successful in attracting new recruits to the Beadworkers Guild and during National Beading Week, so all in all, National Beading Week 2016 was a brilliant celebration of beading and we can't wait for next year's.